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The yard immediately about each house or group of houses of course went with it; the square ground, chunky yard, and hot house were the property of the community. Gardens, as Bartram has stated, could be cleared by anyone anywhere within the limits of the town land.[10] And Eakins expresses their attitude toward the private ownership of land by the quotation, "It is for me, for thee, and for all." He adds, however, that improvements were sometimes sold.[11] This applied to the Creeks in their western home about the middle of the nineteenth century.

Regarding the town lands Stiggins says:

"The inhabited parts of the nation are laid out into town districts designated from some creek, ridge, or point to some other noted point which boundary is organized into certain town corporated precincts under the moral guardianship of their *mic cul ga*." [12] The inhabitants of each town claimed an exclusive right to hunt in the territory immediately about it, and according to Stiggins men of one town approached another "with seeming diffidence, though the towns may be contiguously situated." [13] At times an agreement was entered into by the members of a town to refrain from hunting in a certain territory for a definite period. A kind of taboo similar to the device common among the Polynesians was laid upon it and it was called "ikána tcaka," "the sacred or consecrated land." At the expiration of the time fixed upon the people entered this tract and hunted there together. Bears were the chief animals which they expected to find.

The management of the large town fields is instructive. Bartram says of them:

"Every town or community assigns a piece of land as near as may be to the town, for the sake of convenience. This is called the *town plantation*, where every family or citizen has his parcel or share, according to desire or convenience, or the largeness of his family. The shares are bounded by a strip of grass ground, poles set up, or any other natural or artificial boundary, so that the whole plantation is a collection of lots joining each other, comprised in one enclosure or general boundary." [14]

These fields were planted and cultivated by the town working together, all attending to the several plots in turn. They harvested at the same time, but then each family harvested from its own plot. A part of the produce of each lot was placed in a public granary under the charge of the chief.

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[10] Bartram in Trans. Am. Eth. Soc., vol. III, p. 37.
[11] Eakins in Schoolcraft, Ind. Tribes, vol. I, p. 277.
[12] Stiggins, Ms. Hist. Narr., p. 15.
[13] Ibid., p. 19.
[14] Bartram, op. cit., p. 30.

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as it appeared in 1912. This was largely because it was thought that to sleep much with women enervated a man and incapacitated him as a warrior.[30] Adair says that in their town houses the women were separated from the warriors, and were merely allowed to sit at each side of the entrance "as if they were only casual spectators,"[31] and anciently they had no seats on the square ground. Among the Chickasaw six old beloved women were the only participants in the annual ceremony.[32]

Regarding the labors of women the last mentioned writer declares: "The women are the chief, if not the only, manufacturers; the men judge that if they performed that office, it would exceedingly depreciate them."[33] In fact women anciently, in addition to the indoors work of the house, made all of the pottery and basketry, and did all of the spinning and weaving of bison hair, mulberry bark, etc. The initial preparation of skins was sometimes performed by men, but most of the subsequent work upon it fell to the women. They made drying frames and dried peaches and other fruits upon them, and they of course pounded the corn and did the cooking.

The principal occupations of the men were hunting, ball playing, war, and rites connected with the use of medicine and ceremonial affairs. They built the houses, the corncribs, and the structures belonging to the square ground, felled trees, made canoes and mortars, drums, pipes, calumets, ball sticks, and of course in olden times the axes and the arrows, bows, war clubs, and most of the other articles used in hunting and war. When hunting at a distance from home they cut up the meat, loaded it on horses, and brought it back. It is evident that their labors amounted to considerable in the aggregate, although they were not so evenly sustained throughout the year as those of women. The smaller garden plots were cared for almost exclusively by women, but the town fields were tended by individuals of both sexes, and Bartram says that "there are not one-third as many females as males seen at work in their plantations; for, at this season of the year, by a law of the people, they do not hunt, the game not being in season till after their crops or harvest is gathered in, so the males have little else with which to employ themselves."[34] Later on in the season the same writer tells us that the labor falling upon women was harder.

"In the hunting season, that is in autumn and winter, the men are generally out in the forests, when the whole care of the house falls on the women, who are than obliged to undergo a good deal of labor, such as cutting and bringing home the winter's wood, which they toat on their back or head a great distance, especially those of the ancient large towns, where the commons and old fields extend some

[30] Town in Schoolcraft, Ind. Tribes, vol. v, p. 272.
[31] Adair, Hist. Am. Inds., p. 131.
[32] Ibid., pp. 96-97.
[33] Ibid., p. 422.
[34] Bartram in Trans. Am. Eth. Soc., vol. III, p. 31.

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the old people usually remained in the camps during that time. 221
Bossu says:

"The savages usually set out on the hunt at the end of October. [224].
The Allibamons go to a distance of 60, 80, and even 100 leagues from their village, and they carry along with them in their pirogues their entire family; they return only in March which is the season for sowing their fields. They bring back many skins and much smoked meat. When they have returned to their villages, they feast their friends, and make presents to the old people who have been unable to follow them, and who have protected the cabins of the village during this hunting period."[23]

War parties were usually started as soon as the weather began to warm up a little. The labor of planting was, as we shall see, [241]
interspersed with ball playing and dancing. Right afterwards the men went out again on a hunt. According to one of my informants they thought if they did not do this the crows would eat the corn and the weevil would get into the beans. Then their summer duties began once more, taking care of the harvest occupying first place. War, ball games, riding, horse racing, and dancing also consumed a great deal of the time. Women naturally made their pots and most of their baskets during this period of the year.

War

Out of consideration for standard classifications of customs I retain 721
the name "war" for this section, but it might rather be called "institutional killing," if not "institutional murder." For while the occasions of war were various and "retaliation" for past offenses by the hostile tribe and the necessity of placating the souls of the slain were always the professed objects, the truth of the matter was that war among the southern Indians was a social institution and warlike exploits necessary means of social advancement.[24] This being the case it is easy to see that the score between most tribes was certain never to be evened permanently and that only a social revolution could abolish the custom in spite of the alliances by which certain single units agreed to settle their differences on other grounds. Ambition for scalps was carried so far, Adair assures us, that "sometimes a small party of warriors, on failing of success in their campaign, have been detected in murdering some of their own people, for the sake of their scalps."[25] This result of economic or rather social determinism reminds us of that canny Scotch captain caught in the Baltic Sea in the act of supplying Russia with the sinews of war when his own

[23] Bossu, Nouv. Voy., vol. II, pp. 51–52.

[24] Bossu gives the abduction of women as one of the most important causes of war. If this happened to the wife of a chief he says that the entire nation was obliged to avenge the insult.—Nouv. Voy., vol. II, p. 51. I confess to have read few accounts of wars started in this manner.

[25] Adair, Hist. Am. Inds., p. 393.

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241 followed by a dance in the evening. While the corn was in the ground the young people, under the supervision of some of their elders, were stationed in the fields, where small shelters were often built for them, and drove away any animals and birds coming to disturb it. The boys were armed with bows and arrows, and had acquired such skill with these that Bartram says they loaded themselves with squirrels, birds, and other small game in the course of the day.[77] According to the same writer the men took turns patrolling the field at night, "to protect their provisions from the depredations of night rovers, as bears, raccoons, and deer, the two former being immoderately fond of young corn, when the grain is filled with a rich milk, as sweet and nourishing as cream; and the deer are as fond of the Potatoe vines."[77]

When the harvest was ripe all proceeded to the field in the same manner, but this time each family garnered from his own plot. The women made sacks out of cowskins, and the corn was carried home in these after it had been shucked. Then it was laid away in rows in the different granaries, the better corn farther back as that which would last longest, the worse nearer the entrance. A portion of the harvest, however, each family contributed to a large corncrib, which [621] Bartram says was called "the king's crib."[78] This constituted a reserve supply upon which to fall back when the private granaries gave out. Or it was used to succor other towns, to feed travelers, to supply to war parties, and so on. It was, in fact, a kind of public commissary.

I was told that the ground of the hilis-haya or physic maker was planted by some of the old women in return for his services. This must refer to his garden plot. At Tukabahchee and Kealedji it was close to the northwestern edge of the grounds.

HUNTING

224 Hunting and the ball play were close rivals for the second place after war in the esteem of the ancient Creeks. The former was of course a necessity and has its strictly economic side which does not here concern us. A few words may, however, be said regarding it from the social and religious points of view.

Elsewhere I have spoken of the ancient rights to hunting grounds and of the times of the year when hunting expeditions were undertaken.[78a]

The Creeks usually took medicines and washed their guns in them before they went after game. The Alabama, and probably the Creeks in general, steamed themselves thoroughly in the sweat house and then plunged into a cold stream before they set out. If several

[77] Bartram, Travels, p. 492. [78] Ibid., p. 510. [78a] See pp. 236-237, 404-405.

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hunters were going together they took the sweat bath one at a time. While they were out they put Indian tobacco (hitci pakpagi) under every campfire both going and returning in order to keep away the maleficent spirits of the dead. Before leaving home the hunters prepared a pot of medicine. The last of the ingredients to be put into this were four sticks of miko hoyanidja which went on top. This medicine was used for four successive days, and afterwards the four sticks of miko hoyanidja were taken out and carried along by the party. Afterwards the same medicine was employed by them in all kinds of ways, as an emetic, to bathe in, steam in, etc. If the hunter were not successful he might use another such as the "devil's shoestring" or a vine called itco hiliswa ("deer medicine"). These matters were of course under the direction of a medicine man, since one of these accompanied each party. According to an Alabama informant when deer were killed each hunter gave the medicine man a skin by way of payment, but this probably applied only when the hunt was reasonably successful.

Eakins says that each hunting party made its own regulations regarding the distribution of the game. "The person who starts an animal and wounds it, is entitled to the skin. The meat is divided according to agreement. Each one bags his own game. In cases of thefts from traps, the offenders are punished by law." [79]

When an Alabama hunter gave a bear bone to his dogs he laid it down near by, for if he threw it some distance off he feared that the bear would run away. In fact he threw bear bones far from him at no time. Dishes soiled with bear grease must not be washed at the creek, but instead a bucket of water must be brought to the camp and the dishes must be washed there. The same thing must be done with dishes soiled with deer grease; deer bones could, however, be thrown anywhere. If these regulations were not observed it was believed the hunters would kill nothing. Boys were not allowed to wrestle about in camp: if they did a bear would jump upon someone and kill him. After his return the successful hunter divided his meat among all of the houses in the yard and sent a little to his own parents. Nevertheless, the cooking was done by each family separately. "I have often observed," says Bossu, "that when they returned from the chase the chiefs took great care, before dividing the food, to set aside the share of the old men who were to return to the widows and the orphans whose fathers had been killed in war in defense of the fatherland." [80]

After an Indian had chased a bear, deer, or other game animal for a long time until he had become tired and sweaty he would take a fish-tooth scratcher and scratch one thigh until the blood ran. This would prevent him from getting tired out. Long ago the Indians

[79] Schoolcraft, Ind. Tribes, vol. 1, p. 278. [80] Bossu, Nouv. Voy., vol. II, pp. 36-37.

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224 scratched their bodies all over so that the loss of blood would lighten them and they would be able to run long distances without becoming weary. Regarding the Indian runners in his time Adair says:

"Though some of us have often ran the swiftest of them out of sight, when on the chase in a collective body, for about the distance of twelve miles; yet, afterward, without any seeming toil, they would stretch on, leave us out of sight, and out-wind any horse." He reinforces this statement by telling how the Choctaw chief Red Shoes had run down and killed a French trader mounted on a fast horse.[81]

MEANS OF COMMUNICATION

202 The languages of the southern Indians are matters for separate discussion, and, as our classification is based on language, that in itself will indicate the number of dialects so far as they are known. Some other means of communicating intelligence were also in existence. I shall speak presently of mnemonic devices such as notches, knots, beads, and pictures.[81a] Smoke signals were also in use. In the Elvas account of the De Soto expedition we read that "so soon as the Christians appeared in sight of land [near Tampa Bay, Florida], they were descried, and all along the coast many smokes were seen to rise, which the Indians make to warn one another."[82] And I was told myself that when the Seminole in Oklahoma went out hunting they divided into parties which preserved the proper distance from one another by smoke signals. They would light a fire, and, as the film of smoke rose they would stop it at intervals by throwing a blanket over it. Whooping also formed a kind of means of communication. The death whoop and the whoop of the successful warrior coming in with a scalp were well known. Adair also speaks of "the whoop of friendship," "the whoop of defiance," and the "news whoop."[83] Most interesting of all was a sign language. The existence of such a language among the Plains Indians is well recognized and by them it was carried to a high point of development. It is not so well known that there was such a language among the southern Indians, but the existence at least of a rough and ready device of the kind seems to be proven by Adair, who says:

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"The present American Aborigines seem to be as skilful Pantomimi, as ever were those of ancient Greece or Rome, or the modern Turkish mutes, who describe the meanest things spoken, by gesture, action, and the passions of the face. Two far-distant Indian nations, who understand not a word of each other's language, will intelligibly converse together, and contract engagements, without an interpreter, in such a surprising manner, as is scarcely credible."[84]

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[81] Adair, Hist. Am. Inds., p. 393.
[81a] See pp. 452-456.
[82] Bourne, Narr. of De Soto, vol. 1, p. 32.
[83] Adair, Hist. Am. Inds., pp. 393, 395, 396, 373, 376, 377, 391, 415, 423, 433.
[84] Ibid., p. 70.

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821 If the bodies of young children were not put into trees in the way elsewhere described it was thought there would be a drought.[93] If, after they had been so disposed of, it began to get dry, the people would go to the tree where the body had been placed and sprinkle water all about it.

823 That locations might be considered lucky was shown in the case of my Alabama interpreter. After he had lost two wives in succession the people said that something about the situation of his house was "wrong," so he changed it.

821 773 An Indian preacher, who, of course, was glad to see Biblical resemblances in native lore, told me that there was a story of a great and long-continued drought in which the people were fed on bread and meat by The One Above. This bread is said to have been "something like white peas" (lady peas).

796 The annual busk was the principal occasion with them. Bartram observed in one town that they kept Sunday in his time out of respect to the white people,[94] but this custom could never have been very widespread.

SACRIFICES

782 224 Sacrifices or offerings similar in kind were made by all of the southern Indians. Adair says:

"They sacrifice in the woods, the milt, or a large fat piece of the first buck they kill, both in their summer and winter hunt; and frequently the whole carcass. This they offer up, either as a thanksgiving for the recovery of health and for their former success in hunting; or that the divine care and goodness may be still continued to them. . . . Formerly, every hunter observed the very same religious economy; but now it is practised only by those who are the most retentive of their old religious mysteries. . .

"The Muskohge Indians sacrifice a piece of every deer they kill at their hunting camps, or near home; if the latter, they dip their middle finger in the broth, and sprinkle it over the domestic tombs of their dead, to keep them out of the power of evil spirits, according to their mythology. . .

"The common sort of Indians, in these corrupt times, only sacrifice a small piece of unsalted fat meat, when they are rejoicing in their divine presence, singing Yo Yo, etc. for their success and safety [in case they have lost none of their companions]: but . . . both the war-leader and his religious assistant go into the woods as soon as they are purified, and there sacrifice the first deer they kill. . .

"They who sacrifice in the woods, do it only on the particular occasions now mentioned; unless incited by a dream, which they esteem a monitory lesson of the Deity." [95]

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[93] See p. 392. [94] Bartram, Travels, pp. 455-456. [95] Adair, Hist. Am. Inds., pp. 117-119.

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Elsewhere he states that "when in the woods, the Indians cut a small piece out of the lower part of the thighs of the deer they kill, length-ways and pretty deep. Among the great number of venison-hams they bring to our trading houses, I do not remember to have observed one without it."[96] Again "the Indian women always throw a small piece of the fattest of the meat into the fire when they are eating, and frequently before they begin to eat. Sometimes they view it with a pleasing attention, and pretend to draw omens from it. They firmly believe such a method to be a great means of producing temporal good things, and of averting those that are evil."[97] He was informed by those whites who had become used to living in the Indian manner "that the Indian men observe the daily sacrifice both at home, and in the woods, with new-killed venison; but that otherwise they decline it."[97]

Of course most of these are merely taboos connected with the hunting of deer. Pope says on this point:

"The *Creeks* regularly make a Burnt Offering of what they conceive to be the most delicious Parts of every Animal taken in Hunting, before they presume to taste a Mouthful. The Parts they commit to the Flames are proportioned to the Size of the Animal, probably about 2 or 3 lb. from a *Buffalo*, and still less in a regular gradation down to the smallest Quadrupede, Fish or Bird."[98]

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I have no confirmation or contradiction of the gradations of sacrifice here mentioned, but it is well known even to the living Indians that the old people used to put a little food into the fire before eating. The same thing is noticed in Adair's account of the Creek who railed upon the fire for burning him after the good treatment he had given it.[99] One of my informants had seen the Nuyaka Indians "feed the fire" with turkey during their fall festivities accompanied by hunting and ball games.

TABOOS

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The religion of these people, and, as we shall presently see, their medicine, was seamed through and through with the idea that similarity in appearance means similarity in nature, that similarity in one property involves similarity in all the other properties, and that association of any kind will result in communicating properties from one thing or person to another. This is particularly true about things which are taken into the system by eating and drinking, but applies in other ways as well. Adair says on this point:

789 262

"They believe that nature is possest of such a property, as to transfuse into men and animals the qualities, either of the food they use, or of those objects that are presented to their senses; he who

[96] Adair, Hist. Am. Inds., pp. 127-128.
[97] Ibid., p. 113.
[98] Pope, Tour, p. 58.
[99] See p. 494.